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ABSTRACT

Teachers often spend more time in the classroom dealing with disruptions and conflict than they do teaching. This report describes a study (n=18) that was conducted to assess the effects of a school-based group treatment program on social skills development and anger management for students with behavior problems in an urban Saskatchewan (Canada) setting. The 10-session treatment program was based on a cognitive-behavioral skills deficit approach from Goldstein's Anger Control program for adolescents. The study explores the obstacles that occur when conducting research involving students with behavior problems and identifies the difficulties in the delivery and implementation of anger management programs. The students' perceptions of the program effectiveness and the need to develop their own skills in controlling anger is described. Support is provided for the students' need to develop social skills and ways of managing anger, and for the teachers' ongoing efforts to teach these skills. The survey instrument with responses is included. Contains 27 references. (JBJ)

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RESEARCH IN BRIEF

# Adolescent Anger Control

SSTA RESEARCH CENTRE REPORT: #94-06 DATE: Oct 1994

This report describes a study that was conducted to assess the effects of a school-based group treatment program on social skills development and anger management for students with behaviour problems in an urban Saskatchewan setting. The ten session treatment program was based on a cognitive-behavioural skills deficit approach from Goldstein's Anger Control program for adolescents in Prepare Curriculum (Goldstein, 1988). The study explores the obstacles that occur when conducting research involving students with behaviour problems and identifies the difficulties in the delivery and implementation of anger management programs. The students' perceptions of the program effectiveness and the need to develop their own skills in controlling anger is also described. Support is provided for the students' need to develop social skills and ways of managing anger and for the teachers' ongoing efforts to teach these skills.

***Adolescent Anger Control*** was developed for the SSTA Research Centre by Shelley Tamaki as a summary of her thesis entitled ***Adolescent Anger Control: The Effectiveness of a Prosocial Skills/Anger Control Program Involving Students with Behaviour Problems***.

The opinions and recommendations expressed in this report are those of the author and may not be in agreement with SSTA officers or trustees, but are offered as being worthy of consideration by those responsible for making decisions.

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## Today's Challenges - Teachers Are Concerned

Teachers and educators are concerned. Today, schools in Saskatchewan, share the responsibility of helping adolescents develop socially and psychologically, as well as academically. There is increasing pressure for schools to react and respond to these needs. Often teachers spend more time dealing with disruptions and conflict in the classrooms than teaching. Teachers feel time spent trying to deal with these behaviours would be better spent on preventing problems. Teaching individuals how to prevent conflicts, and how to respond to their anger effectively would increase the adolescents' chances to become more socially accepted and more accepting of themselves.

Parents, teachers and other students are frequently the target of the violence expressed by students. Educators, in the process of moulding students, need to develop interventions to assist students in discontinuing the violent behaviour particularly in the school setting. Many educational interventions usually come after disruptions and anger outbursts. The interventions usually concentrate on decreasing problematic and undesirable behaviours by telling students "to behave" rather than teaching them how to be more effective in their expressions and behaviours.

Mandatory school attendance until 16 requires that schools accommodate and retain students who pose serious behaviour problems. In the past these students may have dropped out or been expelled. School systems must explore avenues to help students develop appropriate expressions of their anger. Anger management among students is a major concern of local school personnel.

## Purpose of the Study

The study was designed to focus on behaviours of at-risk adolescent students in a typical prairie city in Saskatchewan. In addition, the study was designed to explore the effectiveness of an anger management program with at-risk adolescent students in a school setting. At-risk students are defined as students who appear to have a higher than usual probability of expressing some social, psychological, or physical deviation in the future. At-risk students exhibit disruptive behaviours. Such students tend to be hostile, have fewer goals, be expelled from school, suffer from academic inferiority, and have low self-esteem (Sparks & Stinson, 1991).

There is a growing sense of urgency among school personnel to teach youth the social skills needed to deal with their prosocial skill deficits effectively and in appropriate ways. School programs need to be examined to determine their effectiveness. A preventative or proactive focus has greater advantages than responding to crises after the fact. Programs, like the one examined in this study, may be effective in the prevention of inappropriate behaviour and expressions of anger, and lead to improvement in social skills.

## Adolescents Face Developmental Obstacles

Adolescence does not necessarily have to be a time of emotional turmoil and stress (Coleman, 1965). The period of adolescence, according to Goldstein and Glick (1987), "comprises a developmental process in which youth move from the dependency and immaturity of childhood toward the physical, psychological, and social maturity of

adulthood", (p.280). However, research indicates that adolescents face many developmental obstacles (Johnson, 1986).

Physically, adolescents face the development of sexual glands and organs, pubic hair, oily and coarser skin and changes of chemical secretions and hormones. These physical developments affect behaviour and emotions.

Psychologically, adolescents desire independence and development of their identity, experience the tension of inner conflict while questioning the authority and values of their parents and others. Adolescents exhibit an inflated sense of responsibility and a strong need for adult approval. They desire to make their own decisions, like adults, but have not yet acquired the skills nor discipline necessary for effective and appropriate decision-making. Adolescents tend to be idealistic and establish unrealistic goals for themselves.

Socially, adolescence is a period when there is a strong need for peer recognition. According to Goldstein and Glick (1987), "The peer group becomes a powerful influence and affects adolescents' behaviour and attitudes" (p.280).

Adolescents need to receive appropriate direction, nurturing, encouragement and guidance from significant adults for their successful transition into adult life. If children and adolescents do not receive these from their families, schools, communities or social systems, the result is that they are "impulsive, lack planning skills, decision-making skills, problem-solving skills, negotiating skills, and the ability to appropriately control and deal with their anger. The result of these deficiencies has frequently been involvement in delinquent activities, verbal and physical aggression, and the acceptance of an antisocial value system" (Goldstein & Glick, 1987 p.280). These adolescents are often referred to as at-risk students. These students experience behaviour problems at school, home and in the community.

## Students with Behaviour Problems

The precise definition of adolescents with behaviour problems is inconsistent. Professionals cannot agree on whether to call these children emotionally disturbed, behaviorally disordered, socially maladjusted, deviant, psychologically impaired, educationally handicapped, character-disordered, or delinquent states (Winzer, Rogow, & David, 1987). Deviant behaviours in children have been defined in many ways depending on a variety of perspectives and disciplines according to Cullinan, Epstein, and Lloyd, (1983). The common elements in most literature definitions are: (1) the individual's behaviour deviates from the norm; (2) the behaviours recur chronically; (3) the behaviours violate social or cultural norms; and (4) the behaviours affect the child's self-esteem, interpersonal relationships, and school achievement (Winzer, Rogow, & David, 1987).

A student's observable behaviour deviance is considered more important than the label attached to it. Behaviour problems have been conceptualized in many ways according to Cullinan, Epstein, and Lloyd, (1983). According to Csapo, (in Winzer, Rogow, & David 1987), half of the schools surveyed in British Columbia in 1981, had no working definition for emotional disturbance.

Adolescents with behaviour problems account for many behaviours typically included in three basic categories. These categories include aggression (acts of anger), withdrawal, and immaturity. The aggression classification includes fighting, profanity, disruptiveness, irritability, quarrelsomeness, defiance of authority, low levels of guilt and empathy, and high levels of attention seeking behaviours. These behaviours generally are classified as inappropriate acts of anger and result in active, antisocial aggressiveness which conflicts with peers, parents and social institutions (Quay, 1966).

The number of arrests for crimes against persons or property is alarmingly high. Arrests involving violence such as murder, manslaughter, aggravated assault, larceny, forcible rape, and vandalism have increased compared to other non-violent crimes (Goldstein & Glick, 1987). First time juvenile crime offenses are being committed on the average at age 13 years; this age is getting lower (Goldstein & Glick, 1987). Emotions may be at the root of their disruptive behaviour. One of the emotions that causes much anxiety, hurt, disruption, and violence is anger (Defoore, 1991; Williams, & Williams, 1993).

## The Nature of Anger

Anger is a feeling expressed in physical and emotional ways, often connected to other emotions. It is a feeling response to a situation based on personal interpretation of the situation, given one's values, beliefs and past experiences (Sisco, 1991). "This emotional response can range from feelings of mild displeasure or irritation to feelings of fury or rage" (Sisco, 1991, p.3). The physical response to anger includes increased adrenalin flow, increased heart rate, rise in blood pressure, dilated pupils, tensed muscles, flushed faces, clenched hands, and hotness, coldness, or numbness in different parts of the body (Sisco, 1991). All or some of these symptoms can occur. These are natural signals and reactions which indicate to the individuals that something is threatening or wrong (DeFoore, 1991; Sisco, 1991; Tavris, 1989). Anger protects people by warning them when they feel their safety is threatened. Anger can also be related to other emotions. Sisco (1991) stated that, "Sometimes other emotions such as fear, hurt, guilt, shame,

sadness, jealousy, frustration, loneliness, even joy, will trigger anger in us. When this happens, anger can become a way of covering up or defending ourselves from these other emotions" (p.4). Anger is natural; however, the manner in which a person decides to express his anger can be problematic. If anger is expressed inappropriately, it can turn into other disturbing emotions such as hostility, resentment, bitterness, and hate (Sisco, 1991). How a person expresses anger in a given situation depends on past experiences, values and beliefs. Individuals learn from their families, friends, schools, society, culture, and personal experiences what is acceptable.

## The Expression of Anger

The way one expresses anger affects the outcome of the situations, and feelings about oneself (Defoore, 1991; Lerner, 1985; Sisco, 1991). The most commonly identified ways of expressing anger are the "exploding" approach, the "stuffing" approach, the "ventilating" approach, and the "problem-solving" approach (Sisco, 1991). The problem-solving approach is recognized as the most effective way to express one's anger.

"Few programs teach socially acceptable ways of being angry or even respect the basic right (and inevitable need) to feel anger" (Lovett, 1985, p.16). Punishment forms of interventions, such as time-out, scolding, expelling (from schools) and incarceration, are common and often unsuccessful (Goldstein, Sprafkin, Gershaw, & Klein, 1980). Lowered self-esteem and self-concepts result from the punishment interventions (Lovett, 1985). "The problem is that punishment tends to suppress all interest in doing things" (Lovett, 1985, p.16). Students with low self-concepts display more acting out behaviours.

Prosocial skill development allows students to interact with others effectively and to develop better feelings about themselves (Goldstein, 1988). A number of interventions using the problem solving approach to address individuals' inappropriate expressions of anger have been developed and implemented (Cullinan & Epstein, 1985). Some studies have indicated that anger is reduced as individuals learn to engage in a realistic cognitive settling of events and the use of relaxation coping skills according to Johnson (1986), Moon and Eisler (1983), Novaco (1975), Sarason and Sarason (1981), and Schlichter and Horan, (1981).

## The Anger Control Program

The anger control program is based on a program developed by Arnold P. Goldstein. Goldstein (1988) has developed a program in response to the need for prosocial skill development with adolescents. The Goldstein program is based on cognitive- behavioral therapy which combines the cognitive (thinking, evaluating) and behavioral (problem-solving, action) modalities. The cognitive element focuses on cognitive restructuring, arousal reduction, and self-control. The behavioral element is generally comprised of behaviour modification, problem solving skills and social skills. This program includes anger control training based on Feindler's Anger Control Training (Feindler, Marriott, & Iwata, 1984). Research supports Goldstein's process in a number of institutional settings with different populations.

The prosocial skills/anger control program used in this study is based on Goldstein's book, The Prepare Curriculum (1988). The program includes ten sections of

skill competencies, two of which were used in this study. The prosocial skills and anger control sections were used in this study. The first section used provides a set of procedures to enhance prosocial skills in the area of interpersonal skills. This section was formerly referred to as Structured Learning Skills in Goldstein and Glick's previous book, Aggression Replacement Training (1987) and in Goldstein, Sprafkin, Gershaw and Klein's previous book called Skill-Streaming the Adolescent (1980).

The second section in this program's study was adapted from the section referred to as Anger Control training. This section provides specific training procedures for teaching youth a means for decelerating anger arousal, which is, according to Goldstein, "a major precursor of antisocial, aggressive behaviour" (p.247). Two sections of the curriculum were used in this study. This study's intervention program is based on active and deliberate teachings of desirable behaviours, and is designed to strengthen various prosocial behaviours such as problem solving, interpersonal skills and accurate situational perception. The anger control program component attempts to decelerate anger arousal and, in turn, reduce aggressive behaviour.

The program used was designed by Goldstein for small group work. Specific skills were taught in each session. The format of this program is presented in four steps. In the first step, the leader (the researcher) and the assistant (the behaviour classroom's teacher assistant) modeled several examples of expert use of behaviours comprising of skills in which the students are deficient. For example, an alternative to aggression, may be the skill of "staying out of fights". This was modeled following the specific steps outlined by Goldstein's program.

In the second step, the students were given several guided opportunities to practice these skills through role play using the behavioral steps modelled in Step one. (Students

were asked to volunteer to role play but were not forced.) Role playing was intended to serve as a behavioral rehearsal and practice for potential future use of the skill. Made-up situations were plausible real-life situations to which the students could relate.

In the third step, the students were given performance feedback which referenced how well the role-play skill enactments matched the expert model's portrayals. Comments, given in relation to how well the steps were followed, provided social reinforcement.

The final step of transfer training included homework activities designed to increase the chances that skills learned in the training sessions would also be used in school, home, and community real life situations. Homework sheets were given to students to practice the skills outside the session when a similar situation occurred in which the newly practised skill could be used.

While the prosocial skills part of the program had the goal of interpersonal skill behaviour facilitation, the anger control part of the program taught antisocial behaviour inhibition. The anger control section included the reduction and management or control of aggression and anger. Youths were taught to respond in more acceptable ways to anger arousing provocations. Students learned a chain of responses consisting of: "(1) triggers-- identifying internal (self statement) and external events that function as one's anger stimuli; (2) cues-- kinaesthetic or other physiological sensations or experiences signifying anger arousal; (3) reminders-- the first of several anger-reducing techniques taught (in this instance, how to generate arousal-reducing self-statements); (4) reducers-- techniques such as backward counting, deep breathing, peaceful imagery, and reflection on long-term consequences; (5) utilization of the appropriate Structured Learning skill (interpersonal

skill) alternative to anger or aggression; (6) self-evaluation-- of the utilization and results of steps 1 through five in the anger control sequence" (Goldstein and Glick,1987,p.14-15).

These skills were practised and learned during a series of ten 45 to 60 minute biweekly sessions. Each session focused on practising one skill which was further developed outside the class by way of homework assignments. By having students write descriptions of current conflicts and the manner in which the conflicts were resolved learning transference occurred.

Goldstein's (1988) program described above supports Bandura's (1969, 1973) social learning, behaviour-deficit model. This model poses a series of social learning instructional procedures for skills such as expressing a complaint, responding to the feelings of others, preparing for a stressful conversation, responding to anger, keeping out of fights, helping others, dealing with an accusation, dealing with group pressure, expressing affection, and responding to failure.

## Research Methodology

Students were selected from four mainstream school classrooms designated specifically for students with behaviour problems. One classroom in an elementary school with students aged 12 to 15 and another classroom in a secondary school with students aged 16 to 18 participated in the treatment program. The two treatment programs groups formed an experimental group and the control (non-treatment) group was formed from the remaining elementary and secondary school classrooms. The non-treatment group continued with their normal daily academic activities.

The treatment program was conducted in the two classrooms comprising the experimental group by the same leader (the researcher) assisted by the Teacher Assistant from each of the two classrooms over the same six week period. Treatment programs were conducted in the school setting during school hours.

This study included a pretest-posttest experimental and control group design. Comparisons of mean scores using t tests and an analysis of variance between groups were obtained.

The test instruments used were the State-Trait Anger Expression Inventory (STAXI) - Research Edition (Speilberger,1991) and the Social Skills Rating System (SSRS), (Gresham & Elliot, 1990). Student informal evaluations and teacher interviews were collected. Teachers were asked to talk about themselves as teachers, their students, their views on teaching anger management and social skills, and perceived outcomes and reactions to the implemented program. These responses were categorized according to emergent themes.

## Research Findings

The occurrence of a number of difficulties yielded some interesting observations in terms of research with this particular population of students. A short description of the students participating in treatment programs is presented to give further insight into the dynamics which occurred during the study period and to enhance the study description. Students had various histories of running away, aggressive and or withdrawal behaviours, young offender infractions, childhood sexual abuse, attention deficits, substance abuse and/or family problems.

The students had a number of immediate concerns during the study period which may have affected their mood or the ability to focus. The concerns were not necessarily outside the realm of their usual stressful daily existence and were identified during the study period by the students themselves, the teachers and the parents or guardians. Most difficulties related to their daily living activities outside of school. For example, several reported they were in court for various reasons such as sex offenses, theft, assault, and mischief. One student reported she was pregnant and one reported that his girlfriend was pregnant. Some lived in temporary placements because of court rulings, family problems or lack of permanent places. One student's family was involved with cult activities, some students and/or their families or extended families were involved in illegal activities. Several families and extended families of students were in the process of marriage breakups and changing residences. Two students expressed being afraid of physical abuse in their place of residence. All students had enormous daily living pressures outside of school which may have affected their ability to focus at the tasks at hand. This was especially noted when filling out the Pretest and Posttest materials and by observing the level of participation during the sessions.

Complete data was collected from only 18 students out of the possible 34 due to circumstances beyond the researcher's control. Complete data was collected on ten of the experimental group members and eight of the control group members. Partial data was collected on 14 other students. Reasons for incomplete data collection included student suspensions, student drop out, or student runaways. Difficulty in locating parents or guardians to obtain permission and the unwillingness of some students to participate in testing activities along with mood swings of others resulted in skewed test markings.

Realizing the questionable validity of the results due to small sample size which restricts the ability to detect subtle treatment effects, no statistically significant results (at the $p<.05$ level of significance) between groups were predicted and obtained from the compiled data. However, interesting findings from the students' informal evaluations and teacher interviews emerged.

**Student Informal Evaluations**

The students in the treatment program group were asked to evaluate the program through an informal questionnaire (Appendix A). Most of the participants reported that they enjoyed and benefited from participating in the treatment program and were able to give examples of what they had learned. Most saw themselves as improving in the way they responded to their anger at home, school and outside home or school. Participants who gave opinions on how the program could improve stated that the program should be longer (more sessions). All ten group members would recommend this program.

**Teacher Interviews**

One and a half to two hour interviews with the teachers of all four classrooms were recorded and transcribed. Themes emerged from the teachers' perceptions and knowledge about the students, the students' anger management, and the teachers themselves and their teaching methods. The two teachers from the experimental group were asked to comment on the treatment program. Appendix B includes a summary of the interviews. Content from these recorded interviews is described in terms of themes.

**Teacher Findings**

The researcher found teachers of the students with behaviour problems to be extremely dedicated teachers motivated to help their students make positive behaviour changes. These teachers identify their role as a teacher as being very different from other teachers. They have many roles. The teachers feel that their interactions, their methods and techniques are not always understood by other teachers and school personnel. Academic teaching is secondary to things like counselling, parenting, and social working. The biggest challenge is responding daily to the individual needs of each student, building a trusting relationship with students, not taking the students' verbal and physical abuse personally, and keeping the classroom a safe environment.

All teachers agreed that their students needed anger management and social skills training and that this was a priority. The teachers are faced daily with inappropriate expressions of anger and respond informally to such teachable moments in an attempt to teach anger management and social skills.

The teachers believed that some students will benefit in the future, although no specific behaviour changes in the school were identified by the teachers of the treatment groups during the program. Teachers felt that the program concepts were understood but more time was needed to practice the skills. They felt the program should be continued over a longer period with more time to practice skills.

One teacher felt that while the program could be implemented by the classroom teachers, the program would be better conducted by an outside social worker or psychologist coming into the classroom to avoid conflict with the many other roles that the teacher is required to fulfil. An outside person could keep a group which such

diversity of needs together more effectively. Others felt it should be compulsory for teachers to teach a program like this and that teachers should receive training for this or similar programs.

Both Teacher Assistants involved with the anger management programs felt that its implementation was worthwhile and appropriate for the students.

## Implications of the Study for Practice

1. Cognitive-Behavioral Anger Control programs like the program used in this study may be effective for adolescents with behaviour problems.
2. Program adjustments should be tailored to each group to provide students with as many choices and opportunities to feel comfortable and participate fully. For example, the researcher had planned to record each session; however, one student was bothered by the taping, therefore there were no recordings made for this student. Many students had major crises occurring in their lives during the study period. Some students appeared moody and/or restless. The group leader added relaxation exercises, guided fantasy and deep breathing prior the beginning of each lesson to bring the students into the present and focus their attention. All students enjoyed and consented to doing this. Otherwise the program was implemented as planned. Some sessions ran 30 minutes over the time limit in order to cover the lesson and extend practice of the skills.
3. Some adolescents should be screened. According to Feindler and Guttman (1994), adolescents who are experiencing extreme depression and/or suicidal thoughts, who

are currently abusing substances or who have thought disorders or delusions are unable to gain much from a cognitive behavioral group program like the one studied here. These factors were more difficult to determine in the school classroom environment as compared to a clinical residential facility. Screening for these factors was not conducted during this study.

The researcher was informed during the treatment program that some students (reported by students or teachers) were extremely depressed or suicidal, some were suspected of substance abuse, and one student suffered from delusions (teacher reported).

4. The program should continue longer with more time to practice skills. Once per week rather than two times per week may give more time to practice skills and transfer learning. The program could be ongoing throughout the school year. The researcher recommends no less than ten lessons.

5. The program should have two adults involved. The researcher found that working with the Teacher Assistant was highly effective because they were familiar with the students. The Teacher Assistants also had an important role in this particular program in co-modelling the skills through the role plays. Adults involved could be teachers, practicum students, volunteers, psychologists, etc..

6. It is beneficial to have the students familiar with each other prior to the program. The better the students know each other, the more comfortable they will feel, and the more likely that real-life, concrete examples will emerge during the group.

7. Groups should be kept small. Six to eight students seem to work best. On program days when there were fewer students, the students seemed to feel more

conspicuous. If there are too many in the group, students will likely be more easily distracted.

## Difficulties in Conducting Research Involving Students with Behaviour Problems

1. Most parents and/or guardians were extremely difficult to locate for research consent. Complete data was also remarkably difficult to obtain from parents or guardians. Many students were in detention homes, foster care, and single parent homes. The teachers and researcher involved agreed that most students in this study came from severely dysfunctional family backgrounds.
2. The use of written self recorded test instruments is not necessarily suitable to measure changes in students with behaviour problems. According to Chesney (1985), in Chelsom, (1990), "paper and pencil instruments inhibit assessment of anger arousal and are susceptible to subject honesty, literacy level, and attitude toward written work" (p.114). Evidence from this study indicated that written responses depended on immediate disposition of the students, who have daily emotional upsets that conflict with the tasks at hand. The testing seemed to have limited meaning. Qualitative research analysis over longer periods of time may yield more meaning to research with adolescents with behaviour problems.
3. Researchers must be cognizant of the student attendance difficulties. Consistency may be problematic and obtaining complete data from students and parents/ guardians may be limited.

## Recommendations for Further Research

The following are presented as recommendations for further research.

1. Similar studies need to be conducted over longer treatment periods with larger sample sizes to identify the similarities and differences between treatment and non-treatment programs.
2. Studies may be conducted with similar populations from urban or rural settings; adolescents with behaviour problems who have been integrated into mainstream programs; school guidance programs and other community programs.
3. A follow-up study is needed to determine whether there are any long term effects of this program.
4. Studies need to utilize different methods of assessing students with behaviour problems that do not rely on written tests.
5. Further exploration is needed to examine teachers' views of the program content and possible teacher implementation and curriculum integration.
6. A program, similar to the one used in this study, adapted for preteen students from mainstream classrooms may be worth investigating. All students, including students without behaviour problems, may benefit from learning these skills at an early age before negative behaviours become ingrained.

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## Appendix A

## SUMMARY OF RESPONSES TO THE STUDENT EVALUATION TREATMENT PROGRAM QUESTIONNAIRE

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**Have you participated in other anger control programs before?**

No = 8
Yes = 2

**If yes, how does this program compare to these other groups? N=2**

_0_ much worse _0_ worse _0_ same _0_ better _2_ much better

**Was the program helpful?**

_1_ not helpful _1_ somewhat helpful _8_ very helpful

**What did you learn about anger control?**

- **s1** Blank
- **s2** Nothing
- **s3** I learned the A B C's and the anger reducers.
- **s4** The different things that lead up to being angry. Also the relaxation.
- **s5** How to control my anger, because I used to fight my problems out.
- **s6** To keep calm and learn how to deal with my anger. How to deal with it, and also loved the anger cycle
- **s7** I learned the anger cycle and the steps to calm myself down in a situation where I will be angry. It helps to stay calm and out of fights and keep it together at home and outside my home.
- **s8** Things about anger.
- **s9** The three anger controls. There are deep breath, count backwards and happy images.
- **s10** I learned about anger behaviour cycle. I also learned about role plays.

**Have you thought about using anger control:**

at home? __9__

at school? __8__

outside school or home? __8__

**Have you changed any of your behaviours when you get angry?**

**s1** Yes, I've learned to control myself a little more.
**s2** No.
**s3** Not really I don't get mad that often.
**s4** I don't get angry so much any more.
**s5** Not really.
**s6** Yes, I count backwards to calm down.
**s7** Yes, sometimes when I am angry, I think about the steps and I can calm down and talk to the person that I am mad at.
**s8** Yes, I try to control myself. I take deep breaths.
**s9** I don't hit or swear no more. I just walk away now.
**s10** Yes, I don't get into as many fights with my mom any more.

**Would you recommend this program to another class? Why?**

**S1 to s10** responded, "Yes". The written comments were; "I think it is a very useful program", "I think it enlightening even though I knew all the material", "for disturbed youths", "because it's helpful and it helps to use anger control", "This class is very helpful to me and I also learnt that not all people are mean teaching anger control and I wish Shelly could teach us more", " because I think it is a good class and can help other people", "Yes because it help you understand what your mad at", "Yes I would because I think it was very good for me to take it and helped me a lot".

**What changes would you make?**

**s1** I would like the course to be a little longer.
**s2** None
**s3** Shorter but more sessions
**s4** None
**s5** Use anger reducers
**s6** Nothing, I liked it all and I enjoyed Shelly working with us.
**s7** I like the program how it is and there would not be changes.
**s8** I don't know
**s9** Not a thing
**s10** The only thing I would change is longer classes all year round.

**How would you rate your instructor?**

_0_ very poor _0_ poor _0_ average _2_ very good _8_ excellent

**Other Comments:**

**s1, s2, s3, s8, s10** gave no response.

**s4** This class was well put together and well taught. I was happy to be a part of it.

**s5** Shelley your a good instructor I will write things about you. write Letters of say how I did when I was angry.

**s6** Shelly thank-you for helping me see my anger and I can speak on behalf of all of us that we enjoyed everything we did. Thank you again.

**s7** I think there should be more classes say three time a week.

**s9** Good teacher, good interaction, about relaxing, showing where the targets are.

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s = subject

## Appendix B

## INTERVIEWS WITH BEHAVIOUR CLASSROOM TEACHERS EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS

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**Themes Regarding Students**

1. Students are identified by a team of classroom teachers, social workers, psychologists, and school personnel as having extreme behavioral, emotional, and/or social difficulties and as not being able to function in a regular classroom setting.
2. Students come from predominantly dysfunctional families where parents have very little control and or have poor parenting skills. Most students resided at a detention facility, foster placements, or in single parent homes.
3. Students have experienced many failures both in and out of school and suffer from low self-esteem and are angry and hurt individuals.
4. Students' needs are diverse and individual. Most students lack social skills, have difficulty identifying their feelings, distrust adults, and have difficulty taking responsibility for their actions.
5. Students may appear to be withdrawn and ready to explode or angry, hostile and aggressive. The majority fall in the latter.
6. Most students are young offenders and have experienced incidents with the law such as assault charges, drugs and alcohol charges, runaways, breaking and entry, fire setting, vandalizing, public mischief, sexual assault, and child abuse charges.

7. Some students have suicidal tendencies and have few coping skills, and or have psychiatric problems.
8. All students have fallen behind academically in some or all subjects because of their behaviour and/or disposition.
9. Students need structure and stability.
10. Some students have had some formal and informal anger management training from school and/or through youth community services. Teachers agreed the students need anger management skills and social skills. Communication skills and personal intensive counselling have also been identified as student needs.
11. Teachers view students as having potential to overcome their difficulties to varying degrees.
12. All students in the experimental group except for one student agreed that they could benefit from learning to control their anger.

**Themes Regarding Teachers**

1. Biggest challenges as teachers are:
    a) dealing daily with students' diverse needs.
    b) building a trusting relationship with students.
    c) dealing with students' moment to moment behaviour.
    d) not to take the students' verbal and physical abuse personally.
    e) keeping the classroom a safe environment.

2. Teachers place importance on controlling behaviour and teaching appropriate social behaviour through various methods throughout the school year. Academics are secondary.
3. All teachers are empathetic and feel their job is important, however, their particular job is a difficult role that is not easily understood by others.
4. Often there is very little support coming from home families.

**Views on Teaching Anger Management and Social Skills**

1. All teachers agreed that their students needed anger management and social skills training.
2. All teachers (to varying degrees) informally use teachable moments to teach anger management and social skills.

**Teachers' Views on the Program as Implemented**

1. The program should be longer and more often.
2. Teachers believe that some students will benefit in the future although no specific behaviour changes in school were identified by the teachers of the experimental group during the duration of the program.
3. Teachers felt that the concepts were understood but more time was needed to practice.
4. One teacher felt the program would be better lead by an outside classroom professional (due to his teacher role). Another teacher felt it should be

compulsory to teach a program like this and that teachers should receive training for this program or one similar.

5. Both Teacher Assistants who assisted with the programs felt the program was worthwhile implementing and a good program.

6. All students would recommend this program to their peers.